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Dowell Gets Free Hand in Ferry Fight

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Forecast, cloudy showers
(Details on page 2)

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Power Commission Solicitor Testifies

SELL-OUT TO BCE FORCED BY COALITION, PROBE TOLD

Dowell Directs Fight

City council yesterday empowered Acting Mayor Arthur Dowell to act as he seets fit in fighting discontinuation of the Canadian Pacific winter ferry service.

And if he decides that a delegation should go east, he will also have power to take up with Air Transport Board and other authorities Victoria's opposition to Pacific Western Airlines taking over the air service from Patricia Bay.

BONNER ARRIVES

Meanwhile, Attorney-General Robert Bonner arrived in Ottawa last night and said he will meet federal cabinet ministers today to discuss the ferry crisis.

Mr. Bonner will first see Prime Minister Diefenbaker, and later hopes to have talks with Defence Minister Pearkes, Works Minister Green and Justice Minister Fulton.

THE FAT MONTHS

He told reporters he understands the CPR's reason for discontinuing the service is an economic one, adding that the railway probably plans to resume its ferry operation "in the fat months," starting in April or May.

Acting Mayor Dowell and aldermen were strongly critical of Ottawa in the discussion that preceded the unanimous decision.

EAST IS EAST

Mr. Dowell, noting that an attempt to discuss the ferry situation in the House of Commons had been ruled out of order, said it appeared that "east is east and west is west . . . apparently some people in the east don't realize Vancouver Island is part of Canada."

Ald. Hugh Ramsay accused Ottawa of "either complete ignorance or callous disregard."

WASTE OF TIME

He suggested that telegrams were almost a waste of time—although council endorsed a telegram in support of Attorney-General Robert Bonner's efforts in Ottawa—and proposed that a delegation be sent east to fight for continued ferry service and to take up the air service question.

LOSS DRASTIC

Loss to Greater Victoria if Canadian Pacific ferries were not in service during the summer would be "drastic," Ald. Geoffrey Edgelow said. He said it was most important that at least the city obtain a guarantee that summer service would continue.

There is no excuse for the federal government sidestepping the issue of subsidizing ferry service between Victoria and Vancouver, Ald. Geoffrey Edgelow said in a statement last night.

"The government has proven they do believe in sub-

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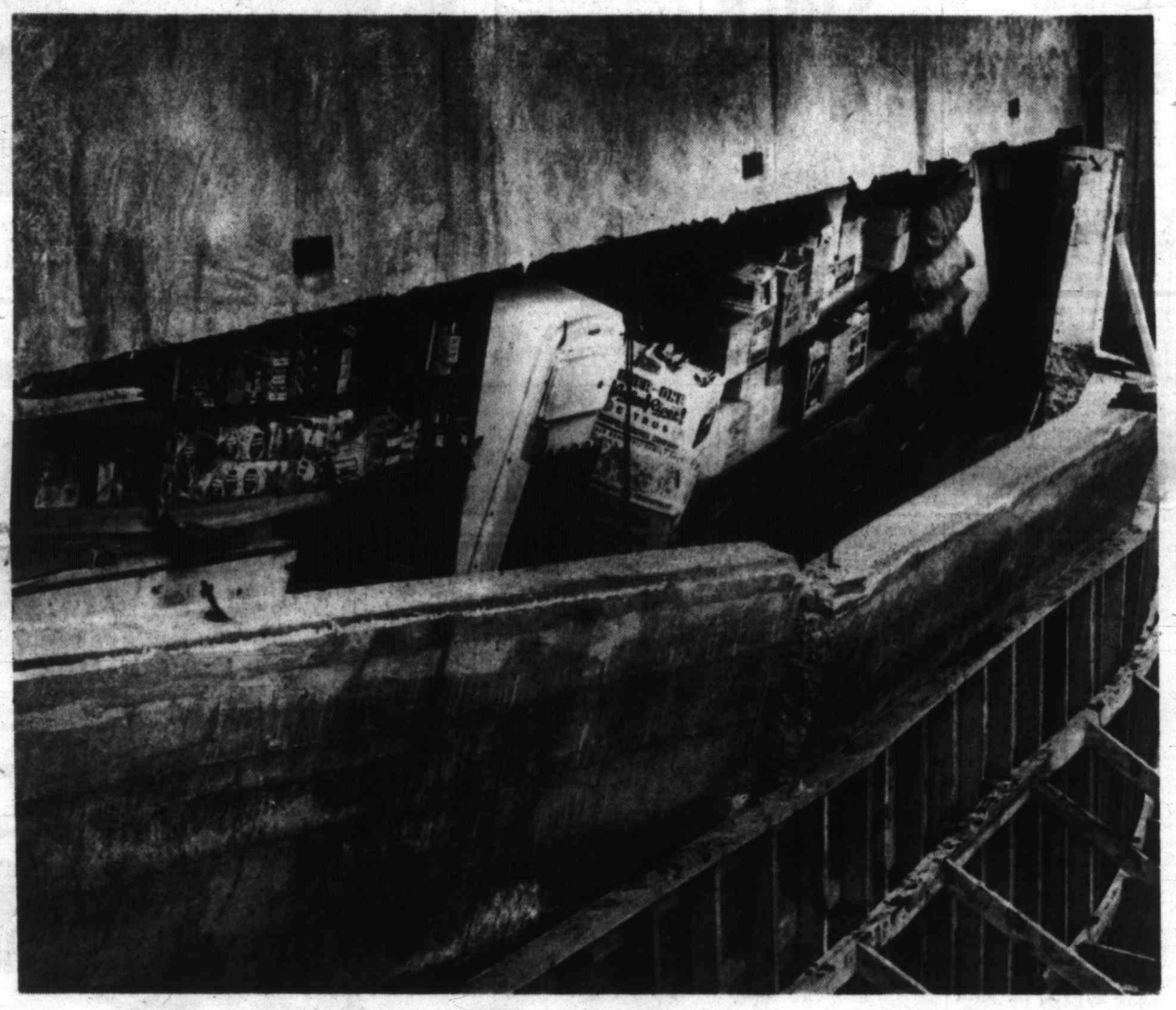

Wall Splits Open as Foundation Crumples

Hanging precariously above the sagging foundation, wall of the business block on Oak Bay Avenue near Hampshire Road was still standing last night. Workmen in the adjacent excavation fled to safety when the foundation crumpled about 1 p.m. and grocery stocks plunged through floor. See Page 19.—(Colonist photo by Jim Ryan.)

Cheaper than War

UN Police Force Urged for Berlin

Stationing of a United Nations Emergency Force in Berlin is the only way to solve the Berlin crisis and avoid the possibility of a third world war, Oak Bay Kiwanians were told last night.

"This force should be formed by the middle powers as in the Mid-East," said Prof. C. S. Burchill of the Canadian Services College, Royal Roads.

"Certainly it will cost the middle powers, Canada included, millions, but still a great deal less than a third world war.

"What's more," he added "there would be no loss of face for the great powers this way."

Prof. Burchill said the UN emergency force "has kept the peace in the Middle East" and if a similar force is sent to Berlin, and the garrisons removed, the peace will also be kept there.

Union Warns Loggers

GRAND FALLS, Nfld. (CP) —District President H. Landon Ladd of the International Woodworkers of America Thursday night asked striking loggers and pickets to "maintain order at all costs" following what he termed a "vehement and inflammatory" speech by Premier Smallwood.

(See Page 7.)

Don't Miss

Pipeline Deal Lined Politicians' Pockets
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★ ★ ★

Will Septic Tank Test Burst Saanich Boom?
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Ice Gorge a Threat

26-Foot Flood Sweeps to City

LAFAYETTE, Ind. (UPI) — The Wabash River's mighty flood crest swept towards Lafayette last night and threatened to carry a 12-mile 35-foot ice gorge with it on a rampage of destruction.

The crest was expected to sweep past Lafayette at a height of 26 feet, 12 feet above flood stage. Most of the city and its companion community of West Lafayette, home of Purdue University, were on high ground and safe from the flood waters.

But the ice gorge, starting 18 miles upstream at Delphi, Ind., and packing chunks as big as automobiles, carried the threat of fresh havoc along the storied banks of the Wabash.

Civil defence workers at Lafayette said that if the ice gave way, it could tear loose every bridge on the river between Delphi and Lafayette.

Downstream at Terre Haute, the next big city on the flood crest's schedule, 100 National Guardsmen and a small army of volunteers waged a battle against time.

The crest was not expected at Terre Haute until today.

Ice-jammed flood waters were also on a rampage through northwest Ohio.

Fire Damages Empty School

SPOKANE (AP) — Fire broke out in an elementary school at suburban Greenacres Thursday night but was quickly contained. No one was injured.

Fire officials said damage was confined to a library, work room and art room. The blaze apparently broke out near a furnace in the basement.

Hope, Lillooet Deals Cited

The Shrum royal commission yesterday heard first sworn testimony of direct interference by a previous government in the affairs of B.C. Power Commission.

Power commission solicitor J. L. Wilson told the royal commission that the Byron Johnson Coalition government forced BCPC to sell Hope and Lillooet electrical systems to the B.C. Electric.

DRAMATIC DISCLOSURE

The disclosure came with dramatic suddenness yesterday morning while Dr. Gordon Shrum was questioning BCPC load development director Charles W. Nash on a reference to "considerable public agitation in Hope" for sale of the electrical system.

Mr. Wilson rose from his place at the counsel table and said the members of the power commission in 1951 did not want to sell the systems at Hope and Lillooet, but were forced to do so by the Johnson Coalition government.

'VERY IMPORTANT'

He repeated his statement on the witness stand, after being sworn in at the request of Dr. Shrum so that his testimony would become part of the record.

"This is a very important matter," Dr. Shrum said. He then asked Mr. Wilson if he was aware of "any other cases of this nature?"

Mr. Wilson replied that there were none to his knowledge.

FIRST INKLING

"Would you know if there were any other cases of this nature?" asked Dr. Shrum.

Mr. Wilson replied that any similar cases would have passed through his department and therefore would have come to his knowledge.

It was the first clear-cut evidence given to the royal commission probing power affairs of direct intervention by the provincial government.

NOTHING SPECIFIC

Former BCPC general manager H. Lee Briggs in his submission made references to cases of government interference. But he has not so far complied with requests by the investigating commission to provide evidence of a specific nature on the major points among them.

As a result of Mr. Wilson's disclosure, Dr. Shrum ordered a further report on the influences which brought about sale of the Hope and Lillooet systems.

OTHER SHIFTS

Officials are also preparing a special brief for presentation next month on the change-over of Sechelt and Powell River systems.

Mr. Nash's brief presented to the royal commission at the start of the morning session dealt with territorial transfers to the B.C. Electric.

He said BCPC paid $29,207 for the Hope electrical system in August of 1945.

AGITATION CITED

The system was improved and expanded and some six years later, in June of 1951, "after considerable public agitation in Hope," the system was sold to the B.C. Electric for $304,255.

"What do you mean by the

Continued on Page 2

Bulletins

VANCOUVER — Representatives of 30,000 members of the International Woodworkers of America (AFL-CIO-CLC) adopted a policy yesterday of "no contract, no work," for the coast lumber industry this year.

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TUNIS — President Habib Bourguiba charged that French consular officials had used their diplomatic immunity to shelter a French spy ring in Tunisia.

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HAVANA — The Cuban revolutionary government asked the Dominican Republic for the extradition of ousted president Fulgencio Batista as a "common criminal."

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VANCOUVER — The Vancouver school board will ask Attorney-General Bonner to appoint special counsellor W. L. Westcott as a special constable with authority to investigate vandalism and crimes involving schools. He is a former RCMP officer.

Scene Stolen By Ike?

LONDON (UPI)—The London Daily Express accused President Eisenhower of trying to steal the limelight from the Duchess of Kent on her current visit to Mexico. The duchess arrived in Mexico City yesterday and will remain there until Feb. 19. Eisenhower is to arrive on Feb. 18.

"I have never seen an embassy so angry as is the British over the president's move," said a Mexico City dispatch, which quoted one British embassy official as saying Eisenhower's decision to visit Acapulco was in "really ghastly taste."

Hoodlum Routed

Donald Stroud, 1269 Pembroke Street, turned the tables on a youth who jammed something in his back and demanded, "Hand over your wallet," at Pandora and Douglas Wednesday night.

He knocked the youth's arm down, and the stranger backed up and stammered, "I'm only fooling," Mr. Stroud told the police. The stranger then fled.